

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

APRIL 1928

THE MECHANICS (AND KINEMATICS)
OF

WEB WORK
PLOT
CONSTRUCTION

BY
HARRY
STEPHEN
KEELER

WHAT SHALL I WRITE?

By Arthur E. Scott

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THE REWARDS OF HUMOR
WRITING

By Edmund Kiefer

+++

AN EPIGRAM'S OFFSPRING

By Arthur Neale

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A TEEMING SOURCE OF PLOT
MATERIAL

By Sandra St. Claire

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POSSIBILITIES FOR THE STORY
WRITER IN PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

By Hamilton Craigie

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LITERARY MARKET TIPS

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Volume XIII

No. 4

20¢

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THE EDITORIAL STAFF of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST offers to writers an authoritative and helpful criticism service. Each manuscript receives careful, analytical attention. Letters of grateful acknowledgment for help we have given are received daily from appreciative clients. Professionals as well as beginners employ the services of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST Criticism Department.

A letter of criticism definitely shows the writer where he stands—whether his work is of salable quality, or amateurish, or just “on the border line.” In the majority of instances the critic is able to point out specific faults, and to suggest ways of overcoming them. Each criticism is a constructive lesson in authorship.

Marketing suggestions form a part of each criticism. A carefully selected list of periodicals or publishers who would be interested in seeing material of the type under consideration is given, if the manuscript possesses salable qualities.

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FOR the convenience of authors, The Author & Journalist maintains a reliable manuscript sales agency.

In offering this service, although we doubtless have closer knowledge of immediate market needs than the majority of writers, we do not claim any mysterious influence with editors nor do we guarantee the sale of a manuscript. We guarantee only to devote honest, intelligent effort to selling manuscripts accepted for that purpose.

The Agency accepts for marketing only manuscripts which the editors deem likely to sell. When in our judgment the material is not salable, it will be returned to the author with a brief critical opinion (not a full criticism) explaining why we regard its chances of sale unfavorably.

Authors who desire an authoritative opinion on the salability of a manuscript rather than a detailed criticism, are invited to submit manuscripts to the Agency Department with this specification. Their work will be given a frank appraisal, which includes the pointing out of prominent faults or weaknesses and suggests possible markets for work of salable type, at a fee which is lower than that charged for detailed criticism.

We do not attempt to market photoplays, verse, jokes, editorials, or other material of limited appeal.

Reading Fee: Each manuscript must be accompanied by a reading fee of \$1.00 for the first 5000 words, 20 cents for each thousand additional.

Commission: In case of a sale our commission is 15 per cent of price received, minimum commission, \$3.00.

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A BRITISH VIEW on the subject of the tax on royalties earned by United States authors in England, is contained in the following letter from Arthur Chapman, a subscriber of Lancashire, England:

"The Editor,

"Dear Sir:

"I notice in an editorial of the January issue of the A. & J. a statement to the effect that a tax has recently been levied by the British government on royalties earned by United States authors in England. The writer of the notes then calls attention to the many English authors earning money in the U. S. and concludes 'and America does not tax their royalties.'

"I should like to point out that this statement is in error, as all royalties earned by writers living outside the U. S. are subject to income tax and have been so for years. This being the case, American authors can hardly complain if at long last the British government decides to return the compliment.

"The writer of your notes also says that 'for

some peculiar reason there is no such tax on outright sales.' The reason is obvious: the U. S. authorities do not impose a tax on outright sales by English authors."

HARRY STEPHEN KEELER, who contributes the remarkable analysis of plot which commences publication in this issue, assuredly speaks with the authority of an experienced plot builder. A list of his published serials and book-length mystery yarns would fill at least a column. From the overwhelming array, we select such intriguing titles as "The Box of Bewilderment," "Under Twelve Stars," "When the Hour Struck," "The Giant Moth," "The Twelve Coins of Confucius," "Find the Clock," "The Miracle Agent," "Tied With Green String," "Where Was Chalmers at 10 P. M.?" "Children of the Moon," "The Voice of the Seven Sparrows," "The Atwood Puzzle," "The Green Jade Hand," "The Michaux Z-Ray," "The Trepanned Skull," "The Search for Xeno," "De Lancey, King of Thieves," "The Crilly Court Mystery," "Paper Heritage," "Shaped in Chicago," "The Twin-Rail Riddle," "The Riddle of

the Yellow Zuri," "Sing Sing Nights," "The Spectacles of Mr. Cagliostro." These tales have been published in various American and English magazines or issued in book form by Hutchinsons of London and E. P. Dutton and Company of New York.

He finds time to edit *10 Story Book* between chapters of his mystery story output, and was formerly editor of Boyce's *Chicago Ledger*, *America's Humor*, and other publications. To a limited few he is known as a rollicking humorist, but he apparently seeks no laurels in this field, and his cleverest contributions rarely have appeared under his own name. His tendency toward intricate story types, and his ability to objectify the underlying principles of plot may be in part a reflection of his special training in electrical and mechanical engineering at the Armour Institute of Technology.

Part I of Mr. Keeler's series consists of a discussion of the Mechanics of Plot; Part II will take up the Kinematics; Part III the fifteen elemental plot combinations. The discussion of Web-Work plot itself, illustrated by a diagram of Mr. Keeler's own latest mystery novel, "The Voice of the Seven Sparrows," will then follow.

READERS WHO NOTE in our columns this month the advertisement of The Palmer Institute of Authorship, undoubtedly will recall that in January, 1924, our columns were closed to the advertising of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, predecessor of the present company. In a lengthy review of the subject, at that time, we expressed our stand on the photoplay situation and criticised an advertising policy which created a false impression of opportunities in the field of photoplay writing.

The situation has not been altered, so far as opportunities in the field of photoplaywriting are concerned. The studios, as a whole, are persisting in the "closed shop" policy which was revealed by The Authors' League of America and other reliable investigators. Film stories are adapted chiefly from published fiction or from stage plays. "Originals," when they appear, are developed on assignment by well-known authors, or by studio staff writers.

The reappearance of the Palmer advertising in our columns indicates no change in our attitude, but is a recognition of the altered policy of the present Palmer Institute. It now concentrates on branches of authorship other than photoplay writing. Its advertising, now placed by N. W. Ayer & Son of Philadelphia, is conservative in tone and in our opinion does not overstress the opportunities open to persons who are qualified to become writers. The company is, therefore, entitled to use the columns of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* to present its message to the writing public.

THE NOBEL PRIZE for 1926 has been awarded to Grazia Deledda-Madesani, a noted Italian authoress.

THAT ENGLISH MAGAZINES do not offer the satisfactory markets to which contributors to the American field are accustomed, is suggested by this letter from a subscriber:

"In the early part of last year I decided that my old tutor was good story material so I sat down and wrote him up, and the story, 'Pat the Teacher,' was the result.

"Having read that the *Wide World Magazine* of England was a good buyer of legitimate first-person narratives, I sent it off in March.

"Many months passed and finally came a postcard: 'I have accepted your story. Please send photographs to illustrate it.'

"At considerable trouble and some expense, the photographs were obtained and sent and I sat back to await the check.

"In the meantime I wrote two other stories of the same character and sold them the first crack out of the box to Mr. Kennicott of *Blue Book*—a splendid fellow to deal with—and in each case received a check for \$100 within a month of mailing.

"Yesterday I received the *Wide World* check covering all rights and the photographs—the editors are very particular about all rights—and the check was for five guineas—twenty-five dollars. Almost a year's delay, three photographs, and all serial rights for five guineas!"

THE NEW FLAT MAILING of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* is meeting with general approval from readers. While the plan of mailing the magazines flat in envelopes is more expensive than that of mailing them folded in wrappers, we are hopeful that the added convenience will meet with a response sufficient to justify the change. Many readers have been buying magazines on the newsstands in preference to subscribing, because in this way they secured their magazines in flat form. Now that they are mailed flat, this disadvantage from the subscriber's point of view no longer exists.

Complaints frequently reach us that the magazine cannot be obtained regularly from the magazine dealers in certain sections of the country. The American News Company, which handles our distribution, has a very efficient organization, but it is impossible for a small publication appealing to so limited a field as that of professional writers, to secure the same representation on newsstands that is accorded to popular magazines.

We, on our part, feel that it is to our advantage to have as many as possible of our readers subscribers of record. On occasions we are able to offer opportunities to these subscribers which we have no way of passing on to single-copy buyers. Added to this, the mail subscriber is more certain to receive his copy regularly, on time, and while the market tips are fresh, and he saves the price of two issues in the course of a year through subscribing.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

April, 1928

The Mechanics (and Kinematics) of Web-Work Plot Construction

BY HARRY STEPHEN KEELER

PART I—THE MECHANICS OF IT

TO understand how to build stories of either complex or simple plots, one must have a thorough knowledge of the elements of which plot is composed. You may marvel at the giant locomotive which carries a heavy train of cars over the Great Divide, but until you learn to know at least that the two chief components of that locomotive are the piston against which the steam is exerting actual pressure, and the connecting rod and driving wheel through which alternate thrusts of horizontal pressure are transmuted into rotary, then linear motion, you are not going to be able to duplicate even Stephenson's clumsy and insectivorous-looking Rocket engine of 1850.

Since the field of plot has been for many years a *terra incognita*, and is, in fact, today, judging from the discussions which take place in writers' clubs over the country: since plot itself, therefore, is a bugaboo to many thousands of writers, the first thing I shall attempt to do is to define it—and I shall be so radical as to give my own definition. With that, I shall endeavor to separate plot into several easily understood and grasped components; and to show that these components enter definitely into atmospheric, thematic, or character stories, as well as mystery yarns. And for those readers who yet may not feel absolutely clear on the subject, I shall present a considerable number of actual geometrical diagrams picturing the 15 elemental combinations of which the most complex plots are only collocations.

With the presentation of these elemental

plot diagrams, I shall give a more complex diagram covering two pages of this magazine—the graphic picture of a full book-length mystery novel, in which the “art” of the novel, if such exists, will be ignored, and the “construction” instead will be analyzed from its first situation to its last.

The analysis of this particular story, however, will bring out points that I can say, from my own experience and observation, are true of all complicated “web-work” stories, no matter from whose pen.

The selection of the novel for analysis will be guided by several diverse considerations. There are, as you know, certain elements that while admitting a story to the book market keep it out of the magazine market—or, while allowing it to pass the test of American tastes make it fail to comply with British tastes, or *vice versa*. Or, while passing all these tests, it may yet fail in the syndication field requiring peculiarly short choppy daily installments. Because of the suggestion, therefore, of the publisher of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST that my own current novel, “The Voice of the Seven Sparrows,” published by E. P. Dutton & Company, has also had book publication in Great Britain *via* Hutchinson & Company, has had magazine publication once in Great Britain and twice on this side, and has been contracted for by the Bell Syndicate for newspaper serialization later, thus passing the tests of three publishing fields and satisfying two sets of national tastes, I shall take this novel as a subject for dissection and graphic picturization. Having a certain modicum of modesty I would prefer to

analyze some other writer's novel, but I am actually limited in my choice by two factors quite other than that advanced by the publisher of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*: one, that I might violate the copyright laws by giving the full story and construction of another man's literary property; and two, that I am, fortunately, supplied with my original notes and diagrams which show how this story was actually built up—literally out of nothing.

This series is primarily for those who aspire to the novelette and the serial. Note: I do not limit its application to the mystery novelette or serial, as the principles given here apply to all stories, long and short, of which the mystery serial is only a variation. As to short-stories, I wish to say that I have myself devised and sold many short-stories that consisted of small quadrangular web-work plots, and have, in my capacity of short-story editor, accepted and bought many such. And so—but in the speaking of "quadrangular web-work plots" it appears that we are already getting into a terminology without having even yet defined our subject; so back we'll go to our statement that we will define plot.

Just what is it?

II.

I MENTIONED in the foregoing that I intended to give my own definition—which is one more added to a considerable number. Plot has been defined elsewhere as "a problem and its solution"—"a series of incidents comprising a story"—"that which makes suspense"—"the story so moulded as to gain for the author the emotional response he desires"—etc. The second definition was offered by no less a person than Noah Webster, but with all due regard to this gentleman, whose one novel contained all the words in the English language, I am going to say that he never attempted to sell a story to Street & Smith, or to serialize his dictionary in the newspapers, else he would not have found himself content with this sketchy definition.

I, on the other hand, do not know anything about the difficulties of the lexicographer or the science of etymology, but unlike Mr. Webster I have had to cope for fourteen years with the problem of making plots that would sell, and the last twelve years of this have been devoted exclusively to the production of the serial story of from

40,000 to 160,000 words. Not alone this, but I have also faced the question from the other side of the editorial door. That is to say, as the editor himself I read for many months the manuscripts of plot-novels as submitted to a magazine which had unlimited capital and whose rate, openly advertised, was one calculated to give it early access to the production of writers, small and big; and, queerly enough, I was, all during this time and for many years additional, again as editor, reading submitted serials on a publication whose low rate essentially dictated that the stories thus secured would be in one or more ways *defective* stories. As editor, I grew acutely conscious of certain defects, particularly when I saw them repeated again and again from different pens, but the publisher's theory in this case was that his particular coterie of readers was not of a sufficiently technical mind in a literary sense to perceive them. Thus, with a personal production of a good many million words, and a reading of a good many million more, good, bad, and indifferent, I take the liberty for the first time of setting forth that which I have found plot clearly and indubitably to be:

Plot, I offer, is the chronological and spatial relationship between a number of incidents which are themselves reactions (sociological, medical, legal, economic, etc.) between characters or characters and inanimate objects, that shall permit, by its intersection with a particular character or set of characters, a story, through the minor and major crises, complications, denouement, climax, etc., thereby produced.

This is a little comprehensive to keep in mind; so let us simplify it into something which we can clearly visualize.

By allowing "chronological and spatial relationship" to ride as "relationship"; letting "incidents" presuppose themselves as happening between people, or between people and things; assuming also that incidents necessarily are reactions in the thousands of fields in which humankind contacts; and allowing the minor and major crises, complications, denouement, etc., in a character's life to be considered simply as "drama," we may reduce our foregoing definition to:

Plot is the relationship between a number of incidents that shall permit, by its intersection with a particular character, a dramatic story.

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You will now note that we have led off with a distinct differentiation between a "plot" and a "story." Later on, by means of diagrams, we shall visualize this difference in such a way that, ever after, mere words only in treating such a subject as plot will seem as a sort of philandering with one's thesis!

III.

IF, reverting to the analogy touched upon in the opening paragraph of this series, we are to compare plot to a steam engine, it must be possible to take it apart and analyze it into some simpler components, so that we may say that, just as an engine is composed of bolts, nuts, gears, cylinders, cams, wheels, etc., so too is all plot made up of a certain number of basic relationships simply joined together in unlimited combinations.

But before doing that, we must follow our analogy of the steam engine and survey plot as to its two main aspects: force and direction. For there must be force involved, since plot, if concurring with the definition rendered under Chapter II, evidently has two abilities, to create a story and make it move, and to direct the course of that story. We feel this, we sense it, even those of us who may be unable to define technically what a "story" is. And this division of plot into two aspects—the Chinese would term these "aspects" feng-shui—is duly authorized for us by the fact that a steam engine's operation, too, can be considered scientifically and logically under two basic heads—force and movement (direction). Indeed, the title of this article was dictated by the fact that the entire field of mechanics, steel and concrete construction, and electro-dynamics, etc., has been divided for years into the study of each of these fields separately, i. e., Mechanics, the study of forces; and Kinematics, the study of spatial movements only. Explicating further, Mechanics is the study of steam pressures, tensile strengths, voltages, etc.; while Kinematics is the study of the application of these forces in various directions or various frequencies, with no reference whatsoever as to how much actual force is under consideration.

So, just as when you give a playful push to a child's kiddy-car, sending it rolling this way or that, if plot too is to make something roll, i. e., to create a moving story, we may put down as an axiom that it must function:

- (a) Forcibly
- (b) Directionally

That is, we are interested in an incident both (a) as to the degree with which a character was urged to help create the incident or to become an unwilling participant in it, or to do something as a result of having been in it, and (b) why he was urged (or hopelessly impelled) to take part in this incident instead of some other; and why, as a result of it, he is urged to take part in a still further incident.

And now to consider only the "force" element of plot, or that which, as we have specified, causes an incident *to be*.

IV.

THE force element of plot is derived wholly from our old friend motivation, to which must be added all our natural laws and physical phenomena. In a moment I am going to discuss that last term just sufficiently to indicate how it, too, for the academically minded, may be considered as "motivation." And as a very hasty and passing example of what I mean by tying up natural laws with motivation, I will offer the following: So that a young man and a young woman desiring to go picnicking on a cloudy day may emanate from said picnicking very bedraggled, there must be added to their picnicking desires, for the production of this eventuality, the known proclivity of clouds to precipitate moisture.

But now to consider motivation solely.

Motivation, as you know, has really two quite distinct angles, i. e., *motiving* and *motivating*. In constructing stories we do not always definitely stand and ponder, differentiating between these two things; for the mind works rapidly and unconsciously, from one to the other. But in complicated plots, the two processes come in very widely, and the plot-constructor often becomes blocked long enough at a particular point in a piece of plot-construction so that he becomes keenly conscious that these two factors exist as separate and discrete things from one another. For the younger element of writers now reading this journal, who do not appreciate the difference between these two dynamic actions, I will say that:

MOTIVING consists of the providing of the proper character to react in a given incident, with given conditions, in a given way.

MOTIVATING consists of providing the proper conditions and causes in a given incident for a given character to act in a given way.

Now a bulging drawerful of notes on the technique of plot construction, collected over ten years, warns me that a full tome—a two-volume work—could be constructed dealing with the various points that are to be taken up in the course of this series in *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*—and I could easily devote a full chapter to each and every point and then not say, perhaps, all that could be said. It must be, therefore, that in this series I can in most instances render you only a single, but clear, example of each technical point touched upon. At times my examples may be melodramatic, farcical, or even fantastic; but they will be invented solely for the purpose of conveying one point and no other.

The laws of motivating and motivating, into which we'll delve presently to get a clear picture, are constant throughout time, whether the story is laid in Rome in 100 A. D. or in New York in 1928, only where they involve solely

- (a) the basic human emotions, such as the desire of women to be beautiful (sex?), men in love to be jealous (sex?), man to hoard against want (self-preservation?).
- (b) natural laws of physics, light, matter, etc.

Motiving and motivating are changing phenomena when they involve

- (c) the shifting economic and social conditions, and the chattels of so-called civilization.

As an example of (a): An old Roman satirist, Martial, who lived in the first century A. D. wrote, perhaps of one of his girl friends:

"You go to bed with most of you in ointment boxes hid:

"You sleep—your face is not with you, but 'neath your rouge jar's lid."

Evidently, any motiving or motivating hinging upon woman desiring to beautify herself is equally acceptable in a Roman story told in Latin, or a flapper story appearing today in *College Humor*.

As an example of (b): If you have disappeared from your farm, and I, your

friend, find your footsteps on the edge of your well, it is natural that I look downward, not up at the clouds for you, for objects fell downward before even Newton "discovered" gravity. And if furthermore somebody creeps up on me and knocks me on the head while I am peering down in that dark aperture, my own mischance is conditioned because I was motivated (and motivated) to look down by your disappearance in a terrestrial sphere where objects fall downward.

Now a moment ago I promised those who wished to be ultra-consistent—the academically minded, I term them—that I would endeavor to provide some basis on which they consider natural laws also as "motivings" and "motivating." I therefore refer such to one, Reverend Williams, who recently sent me for review his book "Evolution Disproved." Says he: "God is the author of all mathematical principles. The square described on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares described on the other two sides, because He made it so. The circumference of a circle is approximately 3.1416 times the diameter because He made it so." It would appear then, if Reverend Williams is correct, that all natural laws are God's motivations entering into our quite human plot!

And in further connection with (b) it should be obvious that the writer of a fantastic story, laid—say—on Jupiter, is not subject to the same laws of motivation as the writer laying his story in Chicago. Gravity pulls harder on Jupiter; therefore people are made lighter yet bulkier. Different standards of love and attraction would probably prevail. William Wallace Cook years ago wrote a fantastic story of an Edgar Rice Burroughsian land where the people talked solely by clattering away on typewriter-like word-boxes. You could there, obviously, prevent an important political speech by stealing your opponent's word-box. Here you steal, at best, only his thunder! In an artificial sphere created by you, as story writer, your people may not have the denary system as we do; they may have the number 14 as their mathematical base instead of 10. In such a system, as you may not know, our old familiar 17 becomes "13!" People on Earth do not get worried around the time of sunset; but in H. G. Wells's "The First Men in the Moon" they actually commenced to sprint desperately

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for cover—for they were frozen to death if they missed getting inside of something before that red globe sank beneath the horizon.

Referring to (c) above: Suppose that in the year 1900 an explorer was going with a party into equatorial Africa; he would very likely encumber the party with a huge mechanical music box replete with heavy metallic circular records, causing six porters to sweat and groan and curse in Bantu; today he carries a light radio set, because he has learned how to transmute ripples in the ether into audible tones. And any motivating or motiving based on heavy metallic circular records becomes unacceptable due to the shift in our civilized accoutrements.

The above points may seem elemental to the practiced writer, but in forging into our own particular Tropical Africa here, the dark land of plot, it is best that we lay out our luggage and see what we have before we go. With that preliminary examination of our luggage, and a knowledge of where we are heading for, we may discuss motivating and motivating, and show as well some of the disturbances that one may produce on the other. In the meantime our assistant can be whittling a pencil for us, preparatory to our making some diagrams after we reach the kinematical phase of plot.

V.

MOTIVING, as we have said, is the providing of the proper character to react in a given situation, with given conditions, in a given way: Let us briefly consider an acceptable example of motiving and an unacceptable one, with the same given conditions:

GIVEN: Henry Rogers, a young man, has stolen \$10,000 from his employer (we dare not even, in the given conditions, denote this employer by a particular name, because the name given to the acceptable character for motiving will not fit the one given in our example of the unacceptable motiving). It is **REQUIRED** that Henry be arrested, prosecuted, and sentenced to a stiff term in prison, so that the author may develop a prison novel.

INACCEPTABLE MOTIVING

will confront us if we make the employer a very rich man, a clubman and man-about-town, participant in many "affairs"; manu-

facturer of cocktail shakers, and stage-door Johnny. If we call him Wellington van Dever, we add to our woes. For such a man, in addition to standing his loss and "calling it a day" would likely be too afraid that his own unsavory private affairs would be dragged forth by the defense in a court prosecution; furthermore, much association on his part with the varied characters of night life, the stage, etc., would lead us to expect from him a rather tolerant point of view tending to excuse human fallibility, and thus overlook his employee's weakness as being the inevitable theft following temptation. He would perceive, if his mind were only half logical, that his occupation—manufacturer of cocktail shakers—was one tending to increase moral weakness (I protect myself here with my "wet" readers by adding "among the already weak"); and his name, whether we believe in ordinary numerology or even the Chinese numerology known as the Yi-King, Tao, suggests somehow a broad-gauge, easy-going, give-and-take individual. And we could not legitimately arrive at our arrest of Henry Rogers.

ACCEPTABLE MOTIVING

is ours if our employer has been made a deacon in some religious sect that is very narrow in its views—you will note that I am not so rash as to endeavor to name such here, much less in any story I might write: a deacon who has never associated with any but people of mentally astigmatic vision; who is a manufacturer of—say—washboards; who has led an impeccable life; who has a somewhat limited capital himself. We may call him Phineas Hardscrabble. We now find that such a character has, as a result of his sect, a fundamentally narrow point of view; also a man who manufactured something to make women work harder than they already do in bearing children, etc., would have a narrow handling of a situation involving the future of a mere man. If his life had been impeccable, he could not suffer in the court trial resulting from such a prosecution; if his own capital were limited—i. e., if we motive him as a small capitalist—his prosecution would be vigorous—and perhaps vicious. Even his name furthers all this.

Because of the vast field to cover, this brief example must suffice to crystallize in the student's mind one of the two phases of that force which causes incidents *to be*. For

it is, you see, in the motiving of the employer that the vital necessary incident of the hero's arrest and prosecution is made—literally—made to happen. That is, it is made acceptable, for *you as writer make existent only that which you can make your reader accept*; in other words, only that which is well motivated and motivated.

Now to do the identical thing for motivating that we have done for motiving, and then we are finished with considering the force principle of plot, and are ready to step into the kinematics of the thing, an angle from which may be surveyed certain salient points that will be of very definite benefit to the embryo plot-constructor.

VI.

MOTIVATING is, as we have said, the providing of the proper conditions and causes for a given character to act in a given way in a given incident.

For instance:

DESIRED that a Spanish girl named Dolores Sanchez (we have already motived her by her name, sex, and race, as an individual who would act hastily and violently through her emotions only) be led to attempt violence on her American sweetheart, William Galloway, whom she loves dearly. GIVEN the conditions that the man and girl are sitting on a stone settee in her arbor. The incident is desired so that the man may be nursed back to health by a blonde nurse girl of the North, thus confronting him with the necessity of continually comparing the deep-feeling brunette with fiery passions, who struck him down, with the cool, calm, but somewhat superficial blonde who pilots him back to recovery.

(This unusual discussion will be continued by Mr. Keeler in our next issue.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers who have any questions concerning structure or plot are invited to send them in at any time prior to the conclusion of this series. Mr. Keeler has consented to answer, from his own experience and study of the subject, at the end of this series, 15 or more of the most salient and valuable queries dealing with the general principles of plot or plot-building. It is suggested, however, that if your question deals with a phase of the subject not yet discussed, you hold it until such phase is reached. Questions should be typed on one side of a single sheet of paper, like a manuscript: double-spaced, with author's name and address in left-hand corner. Only initials will be used in the questionnaire to appear at the end of the series.

INACCEPTABLE MOTIVATING:

will result, if Galloway brags to Dolores that he has had affairs with a hundred girls in his life. This will be unacceptable regardless of whether his statement is true or false, or whether Dolores realizes the truth or falsity of it. Depending upon whether or not his statement can be proven, or whether it rings true or false, a girl of her character would only consider that he was that much more desirable or undesirable; or that he was a braggart; or that he was a liar; or that he was a little conceited. In any event, only an increasing or dimming of her ardor would result.

ACCEPTABLE MOTIVATING:

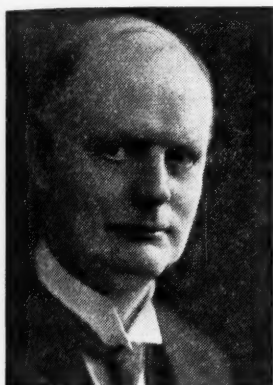
will result if, for instance, Galloway takes from his pocket a number of papers strapped together with a simple rubber band to show her one—say—the contract he has obtained for a new engineering job, and the top paper of which is a folded-over letter from a girl to his brother, Homer Galloway, referring to some Mexican inamorata of the latter's, and saying: "My darling, when you concede that that hot-tamale is unworthy of you, you give me great happiness." If he lays this down on the stone settee while he steps over to get a drink at a nearby fountain, an acceptable motivating has been created for the desired incident: for not a woman on earth (except the feminine readers of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*) but would hastily read the visible lines of such an epistle, and not a true Spanish girl but who, by the time the young man got back, would be seeing red—so red that the young man would find himself sitting there with a poniard in his breast and an hysterical woman saying: "Take that—you double-crossing dog! So I, a Castilian, am a hot tamale, eh? And unworthy of you—and you are her darling, are you?"

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What Shall I Write?

BY ARTHUR E. SCOTT

Former Editor of Top-Notch Magazine.



ARTHUR E. SCOTT

ONE of the big problems that confronts every writer, and on the answer to which his success may largely depend, is the question of what he shall write. Admit that a man has an intimate knowledge of certain subjects about which he can write well, shall he study the type of stories

published in a certain magazine and aim his yarns at that magazine, or shall he go ahead and turn out stories of the kind that please him best?

A good deal may be said on both sides of the question. A marksman, however, takes careful aim in order to insure a score. Shooting haphazard, he would be certain to miss the bull's-eye. From this analogy it may be inferred that an author is much more certain of receiving a check from the editor if he carefully prepares his story with all of that editor's requirements in mind. On the other hand, an author is likely to turn out better work when he devotes himself to those subjects which are vastly entertaining to himself and which he handles according to his own sweet will.

It seems to me that the answer will depend almost altogether upon the matter of finance. If an author is dependent for his living upon his typewriter, it is only natural that he will select the way by which he may be assured of receiving sufficient money for his work to enable him to pay his expenses. If an author is financially independent and writes merely for the love of doing creative

work, he is free to tackle any subject that pleases him and to treat it without regard to any of the editorial restrictions. Not many authors, who are struggling for success, however, are so happily situated, and it may therefore be assumed that it is better for those who desire to see checks arrive with some degree of regularity to aim at the mark which they aspire to hit.

It must be remembered, too, that if you write what you please and treat it how you please, it is likely that your stories will never appear in print, and unless your work reaches the reading public your efforts are rather futile.

IF IT is necessary that the vocation you have chosen should return you the means of living, there is one fact above all others you must remember, and that is that you have entered the ranks of public entertainers, and fill exactly the same position as a playwright or an actor. Your business is to entertain the public. How, then, can you best do this?

Magazines are produced solely as a commercial enterprise to entertain the readers. If they do not entertain the readers, they most certainly come to an end. If you cannot satisfy any editor that you have the ability to supply the entertainment he wishes to provide, then your career as an author comes to an end also. And it is only common sense to realize that you are most likely to please an editor if your work shows that you are acquainted with his magazine. Every editor knows to his sorrow the mass of stuff that has to be handled in his office that has no right there; that is plain evidence that the writer never even saw a copy of his magazine, or at least paid no attention to it.

True, on many occasions I have protested against an author's studying a maga-

zine and then sending in stories exactly similar to those appearing in it. The study of a magazine should simply show an author something of the type of stories used and the style of writing preferred; its omissions should indicate what are the restrictions in force; he should get a general idea of the length of story used; and with this knowledge he should be able to submit a yarn that will, at least, not ruffle the editor and may gain his favorable attention.

One writer told me she had read *The Saturday Evening Post* every week for ten years before she submitted and sold to them her first story. Of course such a long study is not essential, but the fact remains that when this woman started to write her story she was so familiar with the publication aimed at that she at once scored a success. The same writer told me she laid aside each sheet of paper as she discarded it during her revision of the tale, and that the pile of discarded sheets when she was finished was about eighteen inches high. That was a case where study and work brought results. They usually do.

If you have written a certain type of story you will of course submit it first to the magazine for which you intended it; but should your manuscript be returned, you will then try all the other magazines in the same field. But if you still meet with no success, don't worry editors of magazines where your story does not belong on the off-chance that they might take it. An editor gets very well acquainted with the names of would-be contributors who are eternally submitting material that is absolutely useless for him, and eventually, being only human, it becomes difficult for him to read without prejudice the offerings of such writers.

There is another question that an author who decides to aim his work at a certain target must settle. Shall he aim at one magazine only or try two or more? In the beginning it is surely better to try for several markets, making a study of each magazine. It is when an author gets his work regularly accepted by one publication that the problem really arises. In fact, the old adage applies about not carrying all your eggs in one basket. There are authors who write steadily for one magazine for years and get all their work accepted. These seem to have no problem at all. But sometimes conditions change. I have known editors to shut down on an author's work entirely, just when he believed everything was going along serenely, and those authors have been placed in an awkward financial predicament until they were able to make new connections. From an editor's viewpoint it is highly desirable to be able to count upon an author's entire output; but from the author's viewpoint it is frequently well for him to have more than one string to his bow. Much, of course, depends upon the editor. I do not believe there are many who would drop a regular contributor without due warning, but there are changes in editorship and other factors to be considered. Magazines come and go like the leaves on a tree, and policies are constantly altering. With the older, well-established magazines there is little risk of their failure, but even with them changes of policy do take place. I sold an article myself to an old-established magazine, but it has never seen the light of day, because after I sold it all articles were discontinued.

It appears, then, that you are most sure of selling your wares if you study the market or markets wherein you wish to make the sale. This, after all, is only approaching your writing in a businesslike manner.

RHYMES THAT RING

By MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

RHYME that sings and meters that scan,
That is the kind of verse for me;
The verse of a fighting, writing man
Who loves the woods, the trails and the
sea.

The lazier, crazier free verse styles
May snare some hearts with their newer
wiles,
But give me, those of you poets who can,
Rhymes that ring and meters that scan!

What Are the Rewards of Humor Writing?

BY EDMUND KIEFER

THERE is probably no more attractive field for the aspiring writer than that of humorous expression. It is the frisking of the lamb's tail—the first joy of the creative urge, in the springtime of life. When experience has as yet furnished one with only a little to say, the tabloid character of the comic magazine presents a very satisfactory outlet with its simplicity and challenge to facile invention, heightened by the lure of a prize.

Humor magazines come and go; and never before were they to be found in such amazing variety. As in every other field of production, many of these ventures are destined to be short-lived, fraught with financial set-back and disappointment, not only to those immediately responsible for their publication but also to writers who have contributed their interest and efforts as an investment.

The author of this article has a considerably wide experience from which to offer his conclusions, having specialized in producing that delicate, illusive line of copy over a period of twelve years. His success has consisted in associating himself with most of the better known purveyors of humor, including the dignified "*Mr. Punch*" of England. His contributions to the prominent uplift weekly, *Life*, have about reached the awful total of a half thousand. He has indulged in every form of humorous excess from joke writing to elaborate burlesque, and has furnished many mischievous artists with ideas for illustration; which general perpetrations, more or less anonymous, have found their way into every accessible nook and cranny of humor in the publishing world.

His failure, in the face of this landslide of giddy abandon, has been correspondingly thorough in this, that he could have done considerably better, all things con-

sidered, had he struck out from the very beginning into broader fields of humorous expression, say the short-story or the feature article. Brevity may be the soul of wit, but brevity of wit can never be the soul of prosperity. What, never? Well, hardly ever. There seems to be a special Providence watching over free-lance humorists, as over the sparrows who feed on crumbs; for had the writer not had other sources of sustenance, both literary and extraneous, things would have gone hard with him in his mirthful scrivening. Indeed, he hopes he may be pardoned for giving so much account of his own career, for that it is—as he believes—a somewhat typical case.

It is a pretty generally established fact that writing humor in brief is not a monetarily justifiable vocation. It does not satisfy. From time to time, articles appear in the various literary craft magazines, encouraging aspirants to embark on this sort of work to their own prejudice. I have never been convinced of the mature authority of the authors, and I have observed that the data they supply are not very generally reliable. The highest paid writer in the short humor field in America is making, I venture to say, not over three hundred dollars a week; but he is quite alone in his class and so gifted that he might be doing even better, did he not confine himself to the work of a contributing editor. Next, there are a very few staff writers or associate editors paid about one hundred dollars a week; but aside from those in an editorial capacity, the great run of short-humor writers derive considerably less an income from their endeavors. I have known of one star performer who was guaranteed a weekly wage of seventy-five dollars; but he has since forsaken the occupation for that of a writer of longer articles on the staff

of a national weekly where his pay is apt to be several times that amount.

BROADLY speaking, the revenue to be secured from a very diligent and astute pursuit of short-humor writing will not easily exceed fifty dollars a week. Oftener than not, owing to the peculiar vicissitudes of this branch of literary craftsmanship, there is considerably less compensation. Many humorous markets are what trades people justifiably stigmatize as "poor pay" and worse. For some, any invective other than a curse were flattery. There are a number of first-class markets but competition here is unparalleled, editorial judgment is

often inclined to be "choosy," self-conscious and impulsive—if not actually erratic (I have this on the confession of reputable editors); and literary standards are not only high but psychologically incapable of analysis. Humor editors are easily spoiled—their editorial judgments hesitant gambles on the shifting popular fancy. Add to that, the bookkeeping difficulties involved in the marketing of short humor are almost as painstaking as the evolution of the product itself, nay more so.

In the face of such considerations, the benisons offered are really prize money in an open field.

Picture Notes

BY E. S. CONNORS

AS a stimulant in visualizing characters and scenes, I find that my "picture notes" are a great help. Often I run across a picture which makes a strong appeal to me. Perhaps it is a simple water scene, a small lake glistening in the moonlight, with a canoe drifting on its quiet bosom—the whole effect spelling youth and love and romance. Perhaps in an advertisement I find the likeness of a girl whose face and bearing are aglow with vitality and charm.

"I'd like to write a story about that girl," I think.

Very well—snip go the scissors and some day I do write about her.

I collect only pictures which have a special value because they create the atmosphere of a particular season or because they offer characters of some unusual distinction. I never clip merely rapidly pretty girls, and I rarely clip an illustration of a story, for of course I do not care to describe some other writer's hero. Advertisements, calendars, catalogues, and non-fictional magazines offer a rich and unlimited variety of material.

These various clippings I keep loose in large envelopes carefully labelled. My labels include Winter Scenes, Summer Scenes, Young Girls, Fathers, Mothers, Bad Little Boys, Western Scenes, Water Scenes, and so on.

When I find that my visualization of a character is vague, I go to a suitably marked envelope and select therefrom the picture which I think fits my character, and I find it a great aid to have before me the likeness of the person I am portraying.

I do not permit this practice to dull my imaginative powers, for I do not rely upon the pictures to produce my characters. I first visualize as clearly as possible in my own mind the type of person I want to portray. Then I look through my clippings and often I find a picture which exactly suits my preconceived notion of what my heroine should be. Sometimes I use two pictures, each one supplying some special feature which I am emphasizing. In this way the pictures take the place of the drawings I cannot make; when I select an illustration for use in depicting a character, it is just as though I had been able to sketch a drawing to fit my ideas.

My "picture notes" are also a great help in descriptive work. They enable me to keep before my eyes typical scenes of the season or locality which I am describing and when I am writing in a far removed season or place, this is a splendid stimulus to my imagination.

When I sit down in the torrid heat of July to write a Christmas story, I go to my envelope marked Winter Scenes, and spread before me the different views of snowy-roofed landscapes, happy skating parties, and perhaps even a jolly old Santa himself. With these before my eyes, I quite forget the electric fan which is cooling my perspiring brow, for my pictures are artificially furnishing the atmosphere of winter, and aiding my memory for fine detail work.

I could no more carry on my writing without my collection of picture notes than without my regulation note-book.

An Epigram's Offspring

BY ARTHUR NEALE

"AN EPIGRAM in his time plays many parts," as Shakespeare might very aptly have phrased it. So it may be interesting and informative to subject this protean ability to a minute laboratory examination.

During the course of my short, hectic career—to use the popular wording—I have written, I am quite sure, several thousand epigrammatic scraps of humor of all kinds, receiving for them from twenty-five cents to five dollars apiece; and the magazines from which I have been skillful enough to entice—yes, that is the word—these mentioned moneys range all the way from *Town Topics* and *Life* to *Whiz Bang*.

For about eighteen months, too, I did two columns of humor a week, and a mass of anonymous filler miscellany, for a well-known chain of newspapers that stretch from coast to coast and number their readers by the million. And it was while I was doing these columns that I discovered what I call for want of a better word the "adaptability" of the epigram.

It was necessary for me to give my column variety of structure—that it should not show a noticeable preponderance of any one form of humor, that the epigrams, comment, jokes and rhymes should be nicely balanced, that it should contain all the kinds of short humor possible.

Accordingly, it was not very long before I found that I could take an epigram such as, well, say: "The book-censors deserve thanks for directing attention to so many excellent works that we might have missed," and change it into a dialogue-joke as under:

GREAT WORK INDEED!

Jim—These book-censors are doing great work.
James—Yep! But for them I might have missed some darned good stories!

Or, if it was space that I wanted to fill, I could handle the idea thus:

REASON FOR THANKS

"I'm very grateful to the book-censors," said Senator Samuel S. Sureshot thoughtfully.

"How's that?" immediately inquired his bosom friend, Mr. Ezekiel Ezra Nehemiah.

"Well," replied the senatorial luminary, lighting his big black Imperfecto with great care, "they've directed my attention to so many wonderful works that otherwise might have escaped my notice."

Or, if it was comment on the current "news" that I needed, it could appear like this:

"Every honest citizen should thank the book-censors for their great work," says a prominent reformer. We agree! But for their unerring aid we should never have discovered so many excellent books!

Or did a rhyme seem in order, the idea could be served up very prettily as below:

TO THE BOOK CENSORS

Thanks, thanks, good fellows. Many thanks indeed!
Keep up your war on literature obscene!
I but to blindly follow, and you to lead
To worthy book and unknown magazine.

Of course, had I been doing a "class" column, such as, say, well, F. P. A.'s "Conning Tower" of the *New York World*, it would then be necessary for me to be too sophisticated and superior to write dialogue-jokes, and too modest, or perhaps too fearful of criticism, to make epigrammatic, dogmatic statements of personal viewpoint.

Thus the joke-form of the idea would have to be cunningly recorded as a scrap of conversation heard at the country club; and the epigram-form as a mail, telephone, telegraph, cable or wireless contribution to the column from some admiring—and possibly globe-trotting—female reader of one of the very best families, you know; or perhaps as a personal confidence from some implied but unmentioned famous person.

The first of these latter two forms would appear as, well, say: "The book-censors," confides Millie, "deserve thanks for. . . ." And the other might be printed as, "According to one well-known lover of literature, the book-censors deserve thanks for. . . ."

You see, the main idea in the "class" column is to serve up the lines vicariously, making unknown, unexisting, but apparently important, personages take the blame—*not the credit*—for the lines; for the col-

umnist is never sure of the exact nature of their reception. Yes—it's all very subtle.

I find I have, as they say, "digressed somewhat," but I think the "tout ensemble," if I may use the term, of my—er—paper, should make the "how it's done" part of the matter quite clear to even the most backward student.

As for the method of obtaining the basic epigram to experiment upon—well, I find I am not any too clear upon this matter myself.



Verbs Are So Old-Fashioned

BY E. B. CROSSWHITE

TO the thinking observer, verbs would appear to be taking a definite back seat in our language, along with such archaic linguistic forms as "Excuse me"; "thank you"; "May I be of assistance?"; and "Here's that ten I borrowed."

And it is the columnists, those playboys of the press, who are directly responsible for the threatened state of affairs. They have started things by seizing such nouns as "postcard" boldly by the tail and turning them into verbs vested with full legal rights of joining erstwhile brother nouns to prepositions and adverbs and articles and other grammatical second cousins.

"So and So," (the columnist is fond of remarking) "*postcards* in to say such and such."

No contributor ever *writes* nowadays. He *postcards*.

At the rate things are going, we'll have a verbless language long before Tunney fights anybody again, or society beauties look the part, or Jackie Coogan is allowed to let his beard grow.

Think of the time such a lack of verbs will save an harassed author. No more will he have to ponder over the selection of the correct verb. Instead, he will merely take an ordinary noun, juggle it expertly, and *voila*, a pungent verb-substitute!

Fiction in the verbless age will take on a style of its own. A torrid love interval, for example, will be rendered in this fashion:

"A thoroughbred!" he approbationed, as she footed across the room to where he attitude-ed uncomfortably on a Chippendale chair.

Gently he armed her, and for a passionate moment they lipped.

"Honey duck," he larynxed. "Let us railroad away together."

"But what would Papa idiom?" she conversationed.

"Don't gray-matter about him," he lastworded.

So, as the young moon rayed tolerantly down, they pedal-extremited away into the night—toward love.

Enterprising playwrights may some day effect the official banning of verbs by censorship, in order to provide an untouched field from which to glean spicy dialogue.

"What's the matter, old man?" the adolescent prefect of Tallowurst School, England, will remark to his roommate, in the Broadway stage success.

"Oh I don't know, Hawker. . . . Sometimes I get to wondering what they really are. . . . What they. . . . Oh I suppose I'm a rotter for thinking about them. . . ."

"You mean. . . .?"

"Verbs! There, it's out! Do you think me a cad for wanting to know about them, Hawker?"

"Of course not, Corkleigh. I used to be that way myself. You'll learn to get along with nouns after a time. It's nothing to worry about."

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A Teeming Source of Plot Material

BY SANDRA ST. CLAIRE

IF YOU'RE a member of that fraternity of writers who are groaning because they can't stalk down the elusive plot, grapple your courage by the scruff of the neck and follow me:

There is a wealth of plot material—heart-tugging, rib-tickling, gloriously human, ready-made plots—right beneath your very nose.

If you would cash in on the other fellow's experiences, scorn not the sob-sister column. Practically every daily newspaper has its open forum where the world and his mother-in-law bring their problems, temptations, heart-breaks. Plots are just spilling all over this emotional battle-field of feverish jealousies, struggles, loves, entanglements, all the exigencies of unkind Fate. Here is drama, pathos, rich comedy!

That is all a plot really is. A difficult situation and the conflict to remedy or remove the difficulty. It is up to you to provide that, and you are in for some really delightful hours.

Haven't you ever fairly itched to write your suggestions or advice to some of these bewildered mortals in the clutch of untoward circumstances? Haven't you ever said: "Now, if I were in his place . . . ?" Well, here's your chance. Put yourself, or rather your characters, in precisely such a quandary, and then proceed to extricate them. In searching for a way out of their complications, you will find your own problem of limited plot material satisfactorily solved.

Needless to say, one must use discrimination in selection. Many of the queries are foolish and commonplace and useless, but there are enough chunks of real heart-throbbing life tucked away in these columns to start your next story on its way.

I know because I have tried it and it works. In the last few months, devoting only spare time to writing, I have sold four short stories with simple plots worked up from just such material.

For example, one noon hour I was idly glancing through a woman's magazine, when I chanced upon one of these safety-valve departments. A man had written in, without sentimental frills or bid for public sympathy. Briefly, he had married a woman considerably younger than himself, who having been denied the thrill of young romance, had, after marriage, sprinted off in search of this golden mirage, via the "other man," a dashing young villain of her own age, from whose tyranny she was glad enough to escape back to her husband's middle-aged love and dependable income. He had welcomed her back, but was constantly harassed by the fear that she might repeat her little escapade. A sketchy bit of plot? Not at all. I started out to solve this man's problem for him. She didn't deserve to be taken back. With this harsh decision, my trusty Underwood and I thrashed out "Youth Calls to Youth." I sent it to *Breezy Stories*, and within thirty days was rewarded with a neat, pale green check.

Being a greedy sort of mortal, I was loath to part with my bargain plot, so I wrote it over from a different angle, reset it, gave the ending as novel a twist as I could, and "Marked Down" emerged. I sent the story editorward the first of February, and since starting this article have received a check from *Young's* for my trouble.

Read these lovelorn columns with something more than a skeptical grin, and you will find yourself receptive to some very promising plot material. Juggle the situation around a bit. Sharpen your wits by treating the plot from different slants. Perhaps your story will grow so out of bounds that the finished manuscript will hardly be traceable to its original humble origin.

Some spare afternoon trot down to the reference room in the library and haul out the old newspaper files and spend two or three profitable hours poring over the "Tell

It to Hazel" column, or whatever the particular paper you are chummy with calls it. It will be time well spent. These problem stories of human relationships are ready sellers.

Don't involve your characters in more than one difficulty in one story; don't drag

in a single character that is not vitally necessary to the unfolding of the plot. Give plenty of time to finding a catchy title for it, and send to magazines using that type of material.

Try this recipe. There's magic in it. You'll sell your story. See if you don't.



Possibilities for the Story Writer in Freudian Psycho-Analysis

BY HAMILTON CRAIGIE

*"As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."*

IF you are writing a story—and this applies equally to any sort of plan requiring thought and imagination—what would you give for a mental Man Friday—say—a sort of intellectual You-press-the-button-we-do-the-rest proposition?

Well, you can have him or it, according to Wundt, Fechner, Külpe, Freud, and our own William James, by an application to an individual whom you have known under the titles of Subconscious Ego; Unconscious Cerebration, and various other pseudonyms.

No doubt you recall—and I use the word advisedly—that particular problem in plot construction—whether in real life or in real estate, whether you be a purveyor of figs or of fiction—which you gave up in disgust, at least for the time being, turning your attention, for the time at least, to some other less exacting phase of mental activity.

Let us say that the original problem slipped your mind completely; you had tackled it from every angle; you had about given it up, filed it for future reference in some mental pigeonhole.

Then, suddenly, arbitrarily, without apparent rhyme or reason, while you were eating breakfast, riding to or from your office, engaged in any one of a dozen familiar occupations—*plop!*

Like a mouse darting from its hole, appearing without the slightest warning, unannounced, unheralded by any premonitory symptoms, so to speak, you had your solution!

Unconscious cerebration, if you like—but

what if you can control this elusive servant, give him orders, set him a task to perform, with the reasonable certainty of its accomplishment?

According to Külpe and the Würzburg School of Experimental Psychologists, you can do this—it can be done—and in a very practical "laboratory" method, as it is called, trenching not at all on what in Abnormal Psychology is known as the subjective or Introspective Analysis.

To reduce all this to its least common denominator, the method may be described as similar to a "stunt" employed with absolute and continued success by the writer and numerous others—perhaps by the reader of this article.

For instance, on retiring at night, not too late—say, ten P. M.—you wish to arise at six, minus the assistance of a call or your alarm-clock. You say to yourself: "Six o'clock—I must get up at six," repeating this two or three times (silently, of course). However idiotic this may sound, the writer has employed it efficaciously on more than one occasion—and this brings us to the Mental Servant of whom I have spoken.

You have wrestled with your problem, and can see no light. Hand it over to this modern Aladdin, whether it be plot or plan, with a well-defined mental command to solve it for you much after the fashion of your adjuration to that inner alarm-clock of yours.

Then—wait for results. And—the beauty of it is that you do not have to watch for the mouse to come out of his hole.

This is but one very obvious phase of a subject the vastness of which we are but now beginning to realize.

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Trade, Technical and Class Journal Department

JOHN T. BARTLETT, EDITOR

ARTICLE SOURCES

WRITING 600,000 to 1,000,000 words a year, as quite a number of professional business writers do, is accomplished through skill in finding, and using, information sources. Articles cannot be grabbed, in any volume, from thin air. They demand authentic data, of eligible varieties, in quantities. The department editor here offers a summary of principal sources.

Owners and managers of successful businesses. Information is obtained from these for so-called "success stories," method stories, trade-advance-ment articles, trade-news letters. With the department stores and other large retail enterprises, jobbing houses, manufacturers, information may be obtained from department heads or managers, such as those in charge of advertising, credit, and so on.

These are by far the most important sources of the business writer.

Service businesses. Advertising agencies and counselors, architects, window display services, and the like, are important sources of this type. Men are found who are glad to give information in detail about interesting enterprises of their clients. Sometimes, the service business will give only the lead, leaving it to the writer to consult the client.

Trade associations. A surprising number of trade organizations, local, state, and national, exist. In many communities, there are local associations of grocers, druggists, lumber dealers, coal dealers, laundrymen, electrical contractors, credit men, advertising men, engineers, printers, and numerous others.

Associations are not the gold mines of article material that at first thought they might seem; but association secretaries frequently are excellent sources of trade news. A surprising number of associations have full-time secretaries. Consulting associations, a writer can frequently obtain good leads.

Government officials. An occasional business article can be obtained from government officials, local, country, state, or national. Federal departments contain much material. Waldon Fawcett, U. V. Wilcox, and Fred E. Kunkel, Washington correspondents, are prominent business writers who base many articles on material obtained from government sources.

Observation. Sometimes a story is obtained by observation alone—as of an unusual window display, or delivery truck idea. As a writer buys at stores, converses with friends, something of value occasionally is obtained. However, quantity of material based on observation of this variety is very limited. Nearly always, the "observation" story will be much better for an actual interview.

Newspapers. A certain amount of material for trade news letters can be obtained from newspapers; not much, however. Excellent leads for stories are found from time to time in newspapers—especially through close following of advertising. Once in a while an advertising idea will be so good that, of itself, uninvestigated, it is worth a brief story.

Specialists. One business writer has sold many articles on insurance for business men. His information was obtained from insurance specialists. Articles by another writer upon store illumination were based on data from expert sources.

It is possible to obtain some information by mail. During many months, the department editor obtained by mail, from all parts of the United States and Canada, material for numerous advertising magazine articles (*Printers Ink, Western Advertising, The Mailbag*), from advertising and sales managers. It is feasible to obtain information from large concerns by mail, but nearly impossible to do so from the small tradesman.

Druggists, grocers, battery men, filling-station operators, ready-to-wear buyers, and a host of others, have no time for letter-writing. There are exceptions, of course, but the general statement holds. Nearly all information must be obtained for business articles by interview. The telephone can be used for trade news, and for some feature stories—especially after an acquaintanceship has been formed and good-will and confidence secured.

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Literary Market Tips

*In the Trade, Technical, and Class
Journal Field*

The Inland Printer, 632 Sherman Street, Chicago, is now edited by J. L. Frazier, former associate editor. He succeeds Harry Hillman, who has resigned after several years of service.

The American Contractor, formerly at 131 N. Franklin Street, Chicago, has moved to 173 Madison Avenue, New York.

A new amalgamation of trade papers, under the title of National Trade Journals, Inc., has been effected to publish ten established trade-papers under one management. The publications included are: *Building Age* and *National Builder*, *Butchers' Advocate* and *Market Journal*, *Canning Age*, *Motor Boat*, *National Cleaner and Dyer*, *Oil Engine Power*, *Fishing Gazette*, *Motorship*, all of New York, and *Cement, Mill & Quarry* and *Sporting Goods Journal* of Chicago. The present editorial staffs of the various magazines are to be retained. Headquarters will be in New York.

Electrical Manufacturing is a new trade paper for the manufacturing branch of the electrical industry published by the Gage Publishing Company, Inc., 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, who also issue *Electrical Record*. Stanley A. Dennis is editor of both publications.

The Debit, 2213 Dime Bank Building, Detroit, Mich., is a new paper for credit men, to be published monthly, beginning in March, by the Debit Publishing Co. Alfred A. McConnell, editor, writes: "The paper will contain news items, articles, and such other material as is considered of value. Writers whose articles tend to build up circulation, or who show prospects of being the kind we want, will be offered contracts for monthly letters. Our rates of payment will be about as follows: Jokes, \$1; stories, around 800 words, 1 cent a word; news items (personal items), \$1 each; personal stories of real people, around 800 words, 2 cents a word; cash on acceptance. The first issue contains full information of what we can use in the way of copy from authors; a copy will be sent to any writer if request is accompanied by 2-cent stamp."

Donald Cowling is the new editor of *Toilet Requisites*, 250 Park Avenue, New York.

Shoe Merchandising, 210 Lincoln St., Boston, reports that it is not spending any money on articles.

Charles Burke, editor of *Salesology*, 1139 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, writes that he is in the market for only one kind of article—the short "experience anecdote" of 300 words and photo, giving the successful experience of some direct salesman. For such articles 2 cents to 3 cents a word is promised.

Illustrated Milliner, 417 Fifth Avenue, New York, gives its rate of payment as \$10 per page of printed matter, exclusive of photos.

The Man On the Floor, a magazine for furniture salesmen, formerly published by Homer McKee Company, Inc., Indianapolis, has been discontinued.

Western Golfer, Kansas City, Mo., has ceased publication, although it is stated that plans are under way to resume the magazine in St. Louis.

Western Ice and Cold Storage Industries, a monthly publication serving the Ice and Cold Storage industries of the West, apparently buys no outside material.

Property Owners' Magazine, Chicago, has been discontinued. Rudolph A. August, its former editor, is now managing editor for *Electrical Dealer*, London Guarantee Building, Chicago.

Sales Tales, Mt. Morris, Ill., is the new title under which *How To Sell* appears. It has broadened its scope to use more fiction and fictionalized articles. *Sales Tales*, although listed as paying on acceptance, recently reported to a contributor that it would be necessary to defer payment, owing to temporary stress of circumstances.

Keyed Copy, formerly published by the Macfadden Company and devoted to discussion of successful advertising campaigns, has been discontinued as an independent medium, but will be resumed as a department of *Advertising and Selling*, 9 E. Thirty-eighth Street, New York.

Western Advertising, 564 Market Street, San Francisco, is a monthly of which Douglas G. McPhee is managing editor. It seeks articles descriptive of advertising campaigns or discussing a special copy or art technique, within lengths from 300 to 3000 words. "Articles should be descriptive of campaigns or ideas which have actually been carried out. We want articles telling of results—not expectations," write the editors. "Do not send us articles derogatory to any particular advertising medium or group of media, or those which give undue credit to some type of medium. Payment for material is made two weeks after publication at rates of ¾ cent a word and up—average 1 cent. Book rights are usually released upon request."

The Garment Saleswoman, 416 Auditorium Garage Building, Cleveland, edited by F. C. Butler, writes: "We find in going over the several manuscripts which we have received that they deal more with merchandising events and display of garments than they do with successful methods of selling and saleswomen. We prefer articles and stories, preferably not over 1000 words in length, regarding particularly successful methods of retail selling and outstanding saleswomen. Payment is at ½ cent a word on publication."

The Rexall Magazine, a monthly distributed free to customers and friends of Rexall Drug Stores, uses in each number one short fiction story, a brief illustrated article; conducts a Home Institute page, in which recipes and hints are used; a fashion department and a page of reprint humor. Manuscripts are addressed to the editor, *The Rexall Magazine*, 43 Leon Street, Boston.

South's Opportunity Magazine, Johnson City, Tenn., is a new publication devoted to industrial development of the South. Walter Harper, editor, states that no literary material is desired.

THE S. T. C. NEWS

A Page of Comment and Gossip About the
Simplified Training Course and Fiction
Writing Topics in General

VOL. V, No. 4

APRIL, 1928

EDITED BY DAVID RAFFLOCK

WRITERS' COLONY PLANS AROUSE NATIONAL INTEREST

New Courses, Instructors and
Vacation Features Added to
1928 Session of Colony

FIRST ENROLLMENT

The first enrollment received for the 1928 session of the Writers' Colony, beginning July 8, was received from Miss Dorothy Drake, Boston, Mass.

The tingle of spring is in the air. Vacation-time looms. For writers who are planning what to do this summer, The Author & Journalist has a real thrill in store.

The Writers' Colony is bustling with activity. When the 1928 session begins July 8, the writers who come there from all parts of the United States will find the colony a scene of tremendous interest. The teaching faculty has been increased, the scope of writing subjects widened, and the vacation features enlarged. It is very likely that all accommodations will be filled before the Colony opens, and plans are already contemplated for enlarging the quarters next year.

What began as an experiment has in three short years become a great success. Imagine a mountain retreat, located 6,500 feet above sea level in Colorado's Rocky Mountain grandeur, to which only writers are admitted! Nothing of the "school" atmosphere obtains. Admission to the Colony is not gained by passing examinations, but by the virtue of being one who writes.

On one hand the writer comes in contact with a fellow writer from New York City and on the other with a fellow-scribe from an isolated hamlet in Texas. From all over they come, drawn by the common bond of authorship. Beginning writers and experienced writers; writers of short-stories, writers of novels, playwrights, writers of articles and essays, poets. Many inquiries have come from foreign countries, and it is likely even that the Colony this year will have not only national representation, but international.

The Colony will be under the direct supervision of David Rafflock, director of the Simplified Training Course. Daily classes will be held. "The Technique of the Short-Story," a complete intensive training in the short-story form, will be taught by Blanche Young McNeal. "The Various Types of Stories," a practical study of the adventure, love, mystery, character and other types of fiction, and "Writing the Creative Story," intensive training in the literary story, will be conducted by Mr. Rafflock. "The Writing and Production of Plays" is a course that will be given by Harry McGuire. The regular faculty will be supplemented by well-known successful authors who will lecture on writing problems.

Mrs. McNeal is a member of the Authors' League of America, a successful author, and has been teaching short-story writing for eight years.

Her work has appeared in Harper's, Woman's Home Companion, Scientific American, Literary Review, and other leading publications. Mr. McGuire is the author of many

published plays and has won outstanding prizes for his work, such as the George Ade Prize (first place), Wharf Players of Provincetown Prize (first), National Intercollegiate Playlet Contest (second), National One-Act Play Contest (third). He founded and was co-editor of "Pan—Poetry and Youth," and has taught at Notre Dame and Yale.

The vacation features are without number. Every writer will find an endless variety of attractions, whatever his or her temperament may be. There are sports: golf, horseback riding, fishing, hiking, archery, horse-shoe pitching, etc. There are entertainments: sunrise hikes, parties, dances, receptions to visiting authors, teas, stunts, etc. There are scenic trips: the interesting nearby Na-Te-So Indian pueblo, Red Rocks Park, Echo Lake, Mt. Evans (highest peak in the Rockies), Ruined Castle, etc. There is Western lore: the old famous mining towns, rodeos, Indian Hill legends of early-day characters, etc.

Informality is the constant rule at the Colony. Writers may or may not attend classes and lectures; may or may not go on any hike or trip; may or may not attend any entertainment. If a writer wants to be alone, he is permitted to enjoy his solitude; if he wants company, there is always someone similarly inclined.

The main Colony building is a large mountain lodge. Here meals are served and classes are held. Private rooms or rooms accommodating two persons may be secured. The lodge is fully modern, with open fireplaces, and large porches. The rooms are cool and comfortable.

And this glorious vacation, replete with friendships made with writers, intensive training in all branches of writing and innumerable amusements, is obtainable by writers at a very low cost!

SATISFIED STUDENTS

I'm afraid I take a long time over these lessons. My time is somewhat limited—but that's not the main trouble. The main trouble is that there's so much meat in the lessons that every time I pick them up I find something new in them. I'll just have to stop referring back to the old lessons until I get some new ones completed.

There is something remarkable in them. I had a narrative ballad that I knew was good, but it wouldn't sell. Had it in the mails for two years. It made twenty-four trips to single magazines or groups of magazines. Being a narrative poem I thought I'd try the course on it. I found what I thought was wrong with it, changed the ending and two or three lines, and—sold it on the next trip. Sold it to Cowboy Stories, and they had rejected it last August in its old form! Another narrative poem written since starting the course just brought a check for \$20.

Now I'm wondering if the course does that for my verses, what will it do for my stories?—A. I. T., Los Angeles, Calif.

BUGABOO

Taint of Amateurishness Is Abiding Fear of Many Beginning Writers

"Amateurishness is the chief cause for rejections," said Paul Palmer, Sunday editor of The New York World, in a recent interview. "Often the person has had a good idea, yet the completed story doesn't quite click."

What Mr. Palmer says of stories he receives, stories of 3000 words for which he is paying \$100 and more, has proved baffling to beginning writers since the first story was submitted to a magazine.

Amateurishness! It is a word hated and feared. The beginning writer dreads it more than pneumonia or the poor house. Yet he doesn't know how to overcome it, or what it really is. The story he writes seems to read smoothly; he thinks he has a clever plot, he has done the best he could by his characters, his friends tell him the story is good. But back it comes from an editor: "Good—but amateurish." It is tragic.

Well might the writer be baffled, for the cryptic word means much and means little. Editors find it a convenient "counter." It saves lots of explaining and yet is meant to encourage the new writer.

There is no better cure for amateurishness than an enrollment in the Simplified Training Course. The student-writer is trained, beginning with the very fundamentals of fiction writing, continuing through the completed story, to marketing the finished and polished product. Amateurishness is then a word no longer feared. He has learned how to make his characters real; how to give his story movement, design, and significant form; how to create suspense and novelty; how to avoid triteness; how to feel sure of himself so that his stories read smoothly without faltering or evincing crudity. Amateurishness means the negative side of all or any of these. Good, sound training will forever remove and make impossible the bugaboo of amateurishness.

STUDENT SALES

Since writing you last I have sold my ninth and tenth stories to Wild West Weekly—"Poetry and Dynamite" and "Saddle Clues."—H. B. D., Richland, Mo.

I am doing at the present time an average of one story a week for the two national "fan" magazines, Classic and Motion Picture.—H. K. W., Hollywood, Calif.

Have sold a few tabloids and Sunday School stories recently.—N. F. L., Richmond, Va.

The juvenile story I sent in for Assignment 12 sold on its second trip out. Before rewriting it from your criticisms I had submitted it to some eight or ten magazines.—A. E. D., Belleville, Kans.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S

LITERARY MARKET TIPS

GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

Every effort is made to insure the accuracy of information published in this department. In the majority of instances, statements are obtained from the editors themselves. When readers experience treatment counter to the published statements, they will confer a favor by reporting the facts, so that correction can be made if the circumstances warrant it. The Quarterly Handy Market List, published in the March, June, September, and December issues, summarizes all of the information at hand concerning magazine needs and methods of payment. Supplementing this, a Handy Market List of Book Publishers is incorporated in the November issue each year, and a Handy Market List of Syndicates in the February issue.

Tropical Adventures is a new magazine added to the list issued by the Garwood Publishing Company, 551 Fifth Avenue, New York. The first issue, like the others of this group, is filled largely with reprint material. It will, however, use some original fiction. Tom Chadburn, publisher, writes: "While our publications will continue their policy of publishing chiefly reprint material, we are glad to consider original stories at $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 cents per word, payable on publication. For the present, our particular desires for each publication are: a complete novel of 20,000 to 25,000 words; a two or three-part serial of 30,000 to 45,000 words, with shorts ranging from fillers to 6000 or 7000 words per story. The themes required for each magazine are as follows: *Golden West*: Good, strong Western fiction, true-life characters, not exaggerated, but with plenty of action. *Secret Service*: Episodes involving secret-service operatives of any nation; intrigue, smuggling, counterfeiting, hero fights or brain-master type of outstanding characters that lend themselves to the title. *Tropical Adventures*: This magazine commenced with the March issue. Contents take in the entire range of hero battles, pirate and sea stories, jungle or desert adventures, revolutions, thrilling stories of any adventurous type with the tropics as a background. *Underworld*: Stories of any type that apply to the underworld with particular desire for originality and plot or vivid portrayal of actual detective or crook experiences. Contributors should avoid putting too much love theme into stories."

Love Romances, one of the Fiction House group, at 271 Madison Avenue, New York, announces the appointment of Miss Harriet Bradford as managing editor, succeeding Miss Peggy Gaddis, who resigned to go back into free-lance fiction writing. Under the Fiction House system, each of its magazines, *Action Stories*, *Air Stories*, *Love Romances*, *Lariat Story*, *North West Stories*, and *Wings*, has its own managing editor, while J. B. Kelly, as editor, and Meredith Davis, as managing editor, "ride herd" over the group as a whole.

Contemporary Verse has moved from Mt. Vernon, N. Y., to 107 S. Mansfield Avenue, Margate, Atlantic City, N. J.

The Ladies' Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia, under the editorship of Loring A. Schuler, is seeking short-stories. "Romance preferred, but not sentimentality. No sex, no triangles, very little psychology." Authors are advised not to submit articles without first submitting ideas for approval by the editors. Some verse and humorous material will be purchased.

The Aviator, Temple, Texas, edited by Horace T. Chilton, is interested in seeing "some presentable air adventure fiction," not exceeding 5000 words, with 3000 as the preferred length. "I do not care for the too slangy type of story," writes Mr. Chilton. He does not indicate what his rates or methods of payment will be, beyond stating, "Payment will be based altogether on quality."

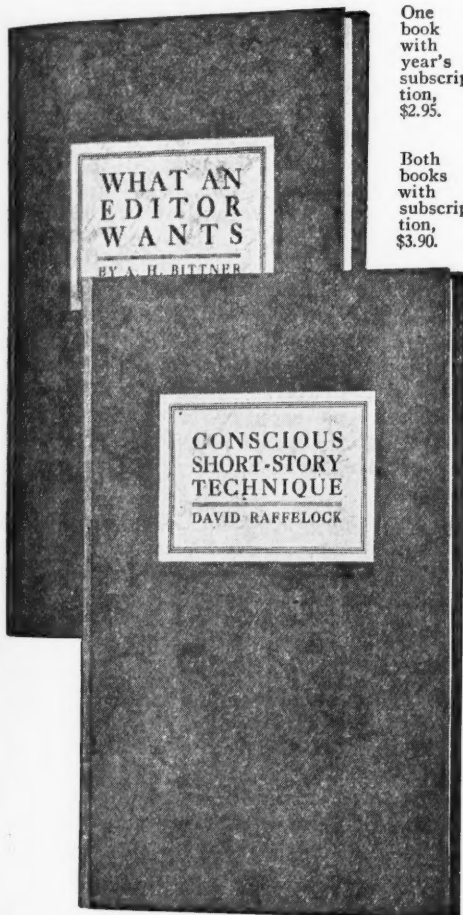
Five Novels Monthly, Clayton Publishing Company, 799 Broadway, New York, announces a slight change in its word-length requirements. "I shall appreciate your announcing in the next available issue of *The Author & Journalist* that the minimum is 25,000 words and the maximum is 30,000," writes F. A. McChesney, editor.

Willett, Clark & Colby, book publishers located at 440 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, is a new general publishing firm. A letter from Wm. J. Colby thus describes its purposes: "We aim to be general publishers. Our specialization will be toward books which have ample justification for public appearance, but they may be in almost any field. Some will be distinctly scholarly, some 'popular.' I hope that most of them will be for the larger masses of readers, rather than for the limited circles." The usual method of remuneration for authors will be by royalties, it is stated, although in some cases outright purchase might be considered.

Action Stories, 271 Madison Avenue, New York, asks for "short Western yarns, with fast action, strong plots, and just enough characterization to put over the main actors in your yarn. Keep away from the gun-dummy types and go easy on the 'revenge' motif, as that has been worked pretty hard of late in stories submitted to us. These same admonitions apply as well to *North-West Stories*, and *Lariat Story*."

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WHAT AN EDITOR WANTS—By A. H. Bittner, Associate Editor, *Frontier Stories*. So full of practical help that it deserves a place on the bookshelf of everyone who aspires to write fiction. Postpaid, \$1.10.

WE ALSO CARRY AND HIGHLY RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING (Prices include postage):

Fundamentals of Fiction Writing, Arthur Sullivan Hoffman. \$2.15.
Fiction Writers On Fiction Writing, Hoffman. \$2.65.
Plotting the Short-Story, Culpepper Chunn. \$1.10.
The 36 Dramatic Situations, Polti. \$1.65.
Writing to Sell, Edwin Wildman. \$2.15.
The Business of Writing, Holliday and Van Rensselaer. \$2.15.

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Rhymes & Meters (Winslow)75
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THE WRITER'S MONTHLY

Edited by J. BERG ESENWEIN

A Magazine of Real Help for all Who Write.

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART says: "The *Writer's Monthly* looks awfully good to me. For years I have been telling beginning authors that there is nothing in the world so good for them as such a magazine. It puts them in touch with publications they would otherwise not think of. So many writers live away from New York, and since by the very nature of the work it must be done in solitude, it seems to me that such a magazine coming in once a month is like hand-shakes from a fellow craftsman."

Single copies 25 cents \$3.00 a year

Write for special offers

THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Dept 63
 Springfield, Mass.

Paris Nights, which was discontinued last month, when the Paris Nights Publishing Company went into the hands of the New York Credit Men's Association, will be revived. Wm. H. Kofoed, editor for the former publishers, writes: "The title, *Paris Nights*, has been bought by the Shade Publishing Company, 1008 W. York Street, Philadelphia, and the new owners will reissue the magazine, starting with the May issue. These people are thoroughly reliable, and anything accepted from now on will be assured of payment, though naturally they are not responsible for the debts contracted by the previous owner. The book is to be greatly improved, with a larger page size. I am continuing as editor for the new owners, and the editorial address will remain 931 Drexel Building. We are in the market for gay, cleverly plotted stories, up to 3000 words (preferably 1500 to 2500) with Parisian backgrounds, though in case of a particularly suitable story laid elsewhere the locale will be changed to Paris by the editors. We also want articles about Paris from the gayer side—the theatres, cafes, boulevards, studios, etc. Rates will continue at ½ cent per word for prose; 15 cents a line for short, humorous verse, up to sixteen lines (preferably with a sex slant, though not risqué); jokes, 50 cents each; paragraphs, 35 cents. *Laughter*, issued by the former Paris Nights firm, is being liquidated, and creditors are referred to the New York Credit Men's Association, 468 Fourth Avenue, New York. Contributors to *Paris Nights* who have not yet been paid for published work are also referred to this association."

Ranch Romances, 799 Broadway, New York, in conformity with the policy of all the Clayton magazines, offers a minimum word rate of 2 cents. Bina Flynn, editor, gives the following length limits for material, which should be of the Western love story type of fiction: Shorts, 3000 to 7000 words; novelettes, 12,000 to 18,000; novels, 30,000 to 35,000, and serials, 60,000 words.

Argosy-Allstory Weekly, 280 Broadway, New York, is heavily stocked up with fiction at present. "We prefer a likeable hero with the story following him pretty closely throughout," writes Matthew White, Jr., editor, to a contributor.

War Novels, 97 Fifth Avenue, New York, a new magazine of the Dell Publishing Company, has appeared. It uses two complete novels of war theme in each issue, similar to stories appearing in *War Stories*, issued by the same company, and it is edited by Eugene Clancy, editor of *War Stories*. Payment, it is understood, will be at similar rates, 1 cent a word or better, on acceptance.

The New York World, 63 Park Row, New York, which seeks distinctive short-stories of 3000 words, paying for them at 3 cents a word up, now pays on acceptance, according to a statement received from the editorial department.

The Miraculous Medal, 100 E. Price Street, Philadelphia, is a projected new magazine of the Association of the Miraculous Medal, a Catholic organization of the United States and Canada. The first issue will appear in May. Lawrence Flick, Jr., editor, writes: "I am in the market for verse, articles, and fiction. Fiction should be Catholic in tone, but it must be clever, bright, and brief—1500 to 2000 words at the outside. Articles should be of timely Catholic interest, or of travel in Mission lands, not necessarily China, though the magazine has as one of its objects the advancement of the work of the American Vincentians of the Eastern Province of the United States in Kan Chow, Southern Kiang Si, China. Articles must be brief also, or of a nature and sustained interest to break up into installments. There is no objection to articles on any interesting phase of life, at home or abroad, as long as they are wholesome and can be tied up with the Catholic point of view. Good photographs are highly desirable and will be paid for. I am especially anxious to hear from Catholic newspapermen and women." Rates and methods of payment are not specified, beyond the statement: "As to prices, *The Miraculous Medal* expects to grade a bit higher than the average small Catholic magazine."

Modern Story Magazine, 523 W. Fifty-fifth Street, New York, R. M. Shipman, editor, writes: "Our usual rates for accepted material are approximately 1 cent a word up. In those very few cases where we have deviated from this rule, it has been because the stories required considerable editing. As to our method of payment, we have been paying within two weeks after acceptance, excepting for a period recently where we got into a temporary jam and had to delay payments for a few weeks longer. This condition is being rapidly cleared up, however, and we will again be paying within two weeks after acceptance."

Pep Stories, 104 W. Forty-second Street, New York, is now edited by Natalie Messenger.

Choice Opportunities, The United Pals Club Magazine, is a projected "club and mail-order magazine," which is to be issued monthly by the Travers Sales Service, 403 Fairmount Avenue, Jamestown, N. Y. George P. Travers, editor, writes: "We would be glad to receive material of 100 to 300 words in length, without illustrations. We want 'home work' ideas; travel experiences, games, beauty hints, formulas, kitchen recipes, time savers, poetry, comic verses, jokes, articles of inspiration and encouragement. Material from new writers will be very welcome; not in the market for fiction at present." *The Author & Journalist* is not informed as to the ability of the publishers to finance and carry on their projected magazine. The statement is made: "We shall pay from \$1 to \$5 for each article accepted upon publication only."

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Sunset, 1045 Sansome Street, San Francisco, "is in the market for some two-part stories of from 12,000 to 15,000 words and some three parters of not more than 18,000 to 20,000 words. The closer to the lower limit the better in all cases. These two- and three-part stories must have good breaking points," writes Joseph H. Jackson, managing editor. "Material submitted to *Sunset* should have a Western setting. Swiftly moving action, wholesome love interest, romance or mystery are most desirable. By Western we do not mean the six-gun, gouge-an-eye-out, blood-sweating type of fiction, nor do we demand an overplus of physical conflict. Neither, on the other hand, do we want slow-moving purely psychological stories, stories of the underworld, or dialect stories. It is our conviction that we can be just as Western—more Western from our point of view—by staying away from the range-war, cattle-rustling hokum as by falling in line and becoming, where our fiction is concerned, just another 'Western' story magazine. These specifications apply also to our short fiction except that the latter should not run over 6000 words at the longest—and we'd rather see the 3000 to 4000-word story. *Sunset* pays about 2 cents a word for material accepted. At present our full-length serial needs are well taken care of. Our immediate need, as we said before, is for two- and three-part stories. We are always in the market for the short-story which fits our program."

Harold Hersey, former editor of Clayton publications and more recently supervising editor of Macfadden publications, announces that a new magazine, *Swap*—*The Swapper's Magazine*, will appear on the newsstands in the near future. This magazine, and also *Elite Styles*, an old-established style magazine, will be under Mr. Hersey's editorship. *Swap* desires short-stories with swapping or trading plots. The first issue will contain an installment of a Western serial, some short-stories, and various departments. It can pay only ½ cent a word for material at the start, writes Mr. Hersey. *Elite Styles* at present uses only articles. They should reflect the latest in style and fashion. The rate of payment is undetermined. The temporary address of *Swap* is Room 612A, 220 W. Forty-second Street, New York. *Elite Styles* is located at 26 Union Square, New York.

The Chatelaine, 43 University Avenue, Toronto, Ont., is the name selected by contest for the new Canadian woman's magazine of the MacLean Publishing Co. Anne Elizabeth Wilson, editor, states that short fiction of Canadian interest, articles on women's interests, and about Canadian women, will be used, payment being made at varying rates on acceptance. Articles should be limited to 2000 words and short-stories to 3500 words.

Mooseheart Magazine, 13 Astor Place, New York, edited by Donald F. Stewart, official organ of the fraternal order indicated by its title, uses short-stories up to 3500 words, occasional serials

up to 30,000 words, and short feature articles. Adventure fiction is preferred, and rates of about 3½ cents a word are paid on acceptance.

Triple-X Magazine, Robbinsdale, Minn., expresses a desire for an air story in every issue. "If the air story has a war setting, with a cowboy hero, the combination is the acme of perfection." Short Westerns, 4000 to 7000 words in length, are solicited, and the call is repeated for Western mystery yarns, up to 15,000 words. Sport stories—baseball, football, and prize ring, are sought.

Battle Stories, Robbinsdale, Minn., announces: "We are paying 25 cents a line for good war verse that has action as well as poetry."

War Birds, 97 Fifth Avenue, New York, is a new monthly magazine added to the Dell Publishing Company group of war magazines, edited by Eugene A. Clancy, which includes *War Stories* and *War Novels*. As its name implies, it is seeking stories of the war in the air, packed with action and fighting; also after-war and present-day air stories using former war birds as the central characters. Short-stories should be from 3000 to 10,000 words in length, novelettes from 10,000 to 30,000 words. Payment is on acceptance at 1½ cents a word and up.

Scientific Naturcopath, 488 Main Street, Hartford, Conn., reported in our last issue as apparently having been discontinued, because mail was returned to contributors by the post office, is very much alive, according to a letter received from M. H. Hammer, assistant publisher. The letters evidently were returned through some misunderstanding.

Best Novels, 130 S. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, Ill., issued by the Modern Publishing Company, Maurice Coons, editor, is strangely dilatory in reporting on submitted material. Contributors report that inquiries concerning manuscripts submitted several months ago are ignored.

The Girls' Friend and *The Boys' Friend*, juveniles issued by the United Brethren Publishing House, Dayton, Ohio, have been combined under the name of *The Friend*. Boys' and girls' short-stories of from 1250 to 2000 words and serials are used. Payment, in the past, has been at the rate of \$1.50 to \$4 a short-story on acceptance. J. W. Owen is editor.

The Writers' Protective League, Inc., 1001 Hilong Building, Columbus, O., announces that its quarterly publication, *The Helping Hand*, will hereafter pay on publication instead of acceptance. This firm also announces that it has discontinued making payment for letters dealing with fraudulent treatment of writers.

Snappy Stories and Pictures, and *The Spur*, New York, listed as paying on acceptance, have been reported by a contributor as slow in paying for accepted material.

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The Log of the Little Theater, 1478 Elizabeth Street, Denver, edited by Elizabeth Kuskulis, is anxious to examine articles pertaining to the little theater movement, and also desires good poetry of modern, sophisticated slant. Payment is made only in subscriptions.

True Marriage Stories, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, has changed its title to *Marriage Stories*.

Pacific Airport News, 414 Decum Building, Portland, Ore., is a new monthly aviation magazine edited by M. F. Wright, who reports a need for articles on aviation from 2500 to 3000 words in length. Editorials, verse, and short miscellany relating to airports, aviation or aircraft, will be used. Payment is made on publication at 1 cent a word.

Auction Bridge Magazine, now at 19 W. Forty-fourth Street, New York, has been purchased by S. G. Barclay.

The Lit, 54 E. Ninth Street, New York, is announced as a monthly magazine to be published for the Greenwich Village Arts Club as its official organ beginning in May. Seymour G. Link and Charles H. Siebert, editors, write that for the present they are overstocked, but that after June, 1928, they will be in the market for interviews, articles on literary personages, and authoritative literary essays, not over 1200 words in length; short-stories of literary background within the same limit, and verse of not more than forty-eight lines. A high literary standard will be required. "Payment will be on acceptance at 1 cent a word up for prose material ordered by us; no payment for poetry."

The Circus Scrap Book, 41 Woodlawn Avenue, Jersey City, N. J., is announced by F. P. Pitzer as a pocket-sized magazine to be issued soon, dealing with the circus historically and fictionally. Mr. Pitzer states: "We are in the market for anything of interest to those who love the circus, such as short biographies of present and past circus owners; circus stories; items from troupers for a department, 'My Most Exciting Moment'; items from trainers for a department, 'How I Trained My Most Stubborn Animal'; poems having to do with the circus; photos: ¼ cent a word will be paid for such material immediately upon acceptance and higher rates for what we consider exceptional. We will also purchase scrap-books containing circus material, books, pamphlets and clippings dealing with the circus."

The Adelphi Company, which was consolidated with Greenberg, Publisher, in 1926, has been revived as a separate concern. H. Thomas Warshaw purchased the Adelphi title on January 1, 1928, from the Greenberg company, launching the new business for the publication exclusively of books on economics and sociology. The companies, although now having no connection with each other, are both located at 112 E. Nineteenth Street, New York.

Popular Radio, 119 W. Fifty-seventh Street, New York, is reported by a contributor as having failed to make payment for items accepted and published during 1927. Payment was to have been made on publication, according to agreement with Kendall Banning, former editor, who is no longer connected with the magazine.

The Spider, Station A, Box 363, Columbus, Ohio, makes no report on submitted manuscripts and ignores letters of inquiry, according to a contributor. Plans for publication of the magazine seemingly have not materialized.

Discontinued—Suspended

The Lyric West, Los Angeles.



Prize Contests

Houghton Mifflin Company, book publishers, and *The American Legion Monthly* announce a \$25,000 prize "for the best novel dealing with the period of the war and with the war as a background, adapted to both serial and book publication." The rules further specify: "(1) This payment will cover the right of first serial publication in *The American Legion Monthly*, but Houghton Mifflin Company's share of the award will be in addition to royalties on the sales of the book. On all sales of the winning novel in book form made through the regular channels of the book trade, there will be paid, entirely apart from the prize, a royalty of 25 cents per copy, with the customary royalties on copies sold at a reduced price for export, or for reprint editions. All returns from motion picture and dramatic rights will accrue to the author, but Houghton Mifflin Company will undertake the sale for the usual agent's commission. (2) Any author, regardless of nationality, may compete, but manuscripts must be submitted in the English language. (3) Manuscripts must be not less than 70,000 words in length. (4) Address War Novel Competition, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 Park Street, Boston. (5) No liability assumed for loss or damage. (6) The competition will close at 5 p. m., May 1, 1929. Manuscripts may be submitted at any time prior to that date. (7) Judges: Alice Duer Miller; Major General James G. Harbord, U. S. A., retired; Richard Henry Little; John T. Winterich, editor *The American Legion Monthly*; Ferris Greenslet, literary director of Houghton Mifflin Company. (8) Decision will be reached and announced as soon as possible after May 1, 1929. (9) All manuscripts offered in the competition are to be considered as submitted for publication on the author's customary terms or terms to be arranged. (10) Every contestant must fill out an entry blank obtainable on application from Houghton Mifflin Company, agreeing to the terms of the contest, and attach it to the complete manuscript at the time it is submitted." Address War Novel Competition, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 Park Street, Boston.

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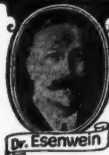
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Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., in co-operation with *The Christian Herald*, announce a prize of \$2500 to be awarded to the contestant submitting the best religious novel before October 1, 1928. The contest is open to every writer, professional and amateur, in the United States and Canada. The prize novel will be serialized in *The Christian Herald* and will be published in book form by Doubleday, Doran & Company. The judges will be: Rev. Daniel A. Poling, Litt. D., editor of *The Christian Herald*; Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, D.D., author of "In His Steps"; John Farrar, editor and critic. The rules are as follows: 1. The novel must in content and spirit interpret the principles of vital Christianity to the modern world and express the purpose and motive of true religion without favoritism toward any one denomination. It need not necessarily treat of church or ecclesiastical problems, nor need it have ministers, missionaries, etc., as its main characters. 2. Manuscripts must be at least 50,000 words in length and must not exceed 75,000. Only typewritten manuscripts, double-spaced and written on one side of the paper, will be considered. 3. The publishers and editors reserve the right to accept any manuscript not awarded the prize on regular terms. *They also reserve the right to cancel the contest if, in the opinion of the judges, no manuscript presented is worthy of first place.* 4. The prize covers magazine and serial rights. The winner will receive from the publishers a royalty of ten per cent on all copies sold by the publishers. 5. No manuscripts will be returned to the authors unless return postage is sent. Every precaution to prevent loss of manuscripts will be taken, but the publishers will not be responsible should any be lost. 6. No manuscripts will be accepted for this competition after October 1st. Manuscripts must be submitted to The Religious Novel Contest, care *The Christian Herald*, Bible House, New York City.

The Drama League of America, in conjunction with the play department of Longmans, Green & Company, announce the following contests. (1) For a full-length play; no restrictions as to theme or construction. The winning play will be produced by the Civic Repertory Theater, New York, the author to receive advance royalty of \$500 and a sliding scale of royalties thereafter. (2) For a one-act play; any theme. The winning play will be given a try-out by the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, with a view to its acceptance for the Keith-Orpheum Vaudeville circuit if it meets production requirements. (3) For a Biblical play; any length or style of construction, theme based on incidents of the Bible or on an ethical subject. The Pilgrim Players, Evanston, Ill., will give the winning play a try-out production. All three winning plays will be published by Longmans, Green & Company on a royalty basis, covering book and amateur acting rights, with \$500 advance royalty on the full-length play, \$250 on the Biblical play, and \$125 on the one-act play. Plays must be sub-

mitted to the various state headquarters of the League in which the authors reside, save that Biblical plays are to be submitted direct to the Drama League of America, 59 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago. Closing date for state contests, September 1st, 1928.

The Seventeenth District, American Legion, Dept. of California, announces a war story contest with nineteen cash prizes. The contest will close at midnight on August 1, 1928. It is open to world-war veterans, nurses who served with the armies, navies, or Marine corps of this country or any other country engaged in the World War. War Mothers or Gold Star Mothers with a story to tell, fathers, sisters, brothers, pals, sweethearts, and friends of ex-service men or women who have never told the heart-throbbing stories of their part in the great conflict are invited to compete. The contest is open to people of all nations engaged in the World War. The prizes have been divided into three distinct classes. Thrilling stories will be included in one class with three cash prizes hung up for the best stories. Every exciting incident of the war, whether it happened in the trenches or in the training camps, on the train or transport or at home, is admitted. Another class has been set aside for the funny things that happened during the war. Humorous stunts, side-splitting gags, the laughs you got out of being in the service or received from letters from those who served are entered in this class. The lessons you learned from the World War are included in the third division. Prizes offered in each class are: first, \$15; second, \$10; third, \$5. In addition there will be ten general prizes of \$1 each for stories judged the next best. Stories should contain not more than 1000 words and should be written on one side of paper, the name and address of the contributor on the upper left hand corner of the first page of the manuscript. Contributions must be submitted to War Story Contest Editor, 17th District, American Legion, 347 S. Spring Street, Los Angeles. No correspondence entered into with contributors and no manuscripts returned. Contestants may send in as many stories as they wish and take part in all three divisions of the contest.

The Grimes Company, publishers, National Press Building, Washington, D. C., announce that their third short-story contest is in progress. Charles A. Grimes, editor, writes: "Prizes amounting to \$2500 are the awards, and liberal space rates are paid for stories accepted. The stories are sent out as part of our newspaper syndicate service. Details will gladly be furnished to those interested."

Wallace Heberd, Publisher, 129 El Paseo de la Guerra, Santa Barbara, Calif., whose prize essay competition nominating an out-of-print book for republication was announced in January, advises that the closing date for submission of essays will be August 1, 1928, and that no essay submitted should exceed 2000 words.

The Owl Drug Company (chain stores in various cities), announces \$150 in cash prizes for 250-word articles telling "some interesting or amusing experience you have had in Owl Drug Stores." The letters must describe actual experiences. Comical experiences or exceptional service rendered are suggested as good material. Prizes are \$35, \$20, \$10, and there are seventeen prizes of \$5 each. Write on one side of the paper only and address the editor, *Owl News*, 611 Mission Street, San Francisco. The company reserves the right to publish any or all of the winning letters. The closing date is not at hand.

Reilly & Lee, book publishers, 536 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, announce that a prize of \$1000 will be awarded to the person suggesting the best title, accompanied by the best fifty-word letter setting out the reasons for selecting this title, for a new Edgar Guest book of verse, to be published in August. The title contest closes April 30th. Should two or more persons suggest the title judged best, and their letters be judged of equal merit, each will be awarded the full amount of the prize. Further details obtainable from the publishers.

Apropos, 4228 Lindell Boulevard, St. Louis, Mo., official organ of the Automobile Club of Missouri, offers a prize of \$35, open only to undergraduates in Missouri colleges and universities, for the best humorous article or skit on motoring between 1500 and 2500 words. Address College Contest Editor.

Pegasus, a quarterly magazine of verse, 921 Mound Street, Springfield, Ohio, beginning with the May number, will offer a \$5 prize for the best poem in each issue. No free verse will be published. Noah F. Whitaker is editor.

The Jenny Wren Company, Lawrence, Kans., offers \$500 in prizes for best letters on the subject, "The biggest reason why Jenny Wren ready-mixed flour appeals to me." Closing date, April 30. Address contest editor. Letters must bear name and address of contestant's grocer.

The D. M. Ferry Company, Detroit, offers \$2000 in prizes for best letters from adults on the subject: "Why I Plant a Garden," and similar prizes to boys and girls under sixteen for the best letters on the same subject. One thousand dollars will be awarded to dealers for letters on the subject: "How I Promote the Sale of Ferry's Seeds." The contest closes May 15, 1928.

The Glee Club, a department of *The Chicago Daily News*, 15 N. Wells Street, Chicago, until further notice, will award a \$5 bonus to the writer of the best joke of the week. One dollar is paid for each joke accepted. James A. Sanaker, editor of the department, states that material will be returned only when accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

D. M. Ferry and Company, seed dealers, are offering \$5000 in prizes for the 105 best letters on "Why I Plant A Garden." Two thousand dollars will be awarded for letters from grown-ups; \$2000 for letters from children, and \$1000 for letters from seed dealers. The company wants "real whys" giving individual reasons. Letters are limited to 500 words. Write name and address at the top of each page of the letter. Address D. M. Ferry & Co., Detroit, Michigan, Dept. C. Contest closes at midnight May 15, 1928.

Chatto & Windus, British book publishers, 97 and 99 St. Martin's Lane, London, W. C. 2, England, announce a competition for historical novels, 65,000 words in length or over. First prize will be £300 on account of a royalty of 20 per cent for the first ten thousand copies sold and 25 per cent thereafter; second prize, an advance of £150 on account of a royalty of 15 per cent on the first five thousand copies sold, and 20 per cent thereafter. Closing date, May 31, 1929.

The Fleischmann's Yeast Company is conducting a \$10,000 letter contest, details of which may be secured from local grocery dealers.

Normal Instructor and Primary Plans, Dansville, N. Y., announces two series of prize awards to teachers, supervisors, principals, superintendents, instructors in teacher-training institutions and 1928 graduates from the latter, for the best stories of their travel experiences during the 1928 summer vacation. Prizes of \$300, \$150, \$100, and \$50 will be awarded in each group, one consisting of stories of travel abroad and one of stories of travel in the United States or Canada. Entries are limited to 2500 words.

The Greenwich Village Arts Club, 54 E. Ninth Street, New York, A. J. Reynolds, secretary, conducts an annual anthology contest, awarding \$20 for the best poems in the Anthology by an unknown poet and \$20 for the best poems by a known poet. Poems submitted for the anthology must be unpublished and accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Judy Publishing Company, 1922 Lake Street, Chicago, offers five prizes of \$10 each for letters and essays on a book, "Men and Things," written by Will Judy. Closing date, August 31, 1928. Address Men and Things Contest Editor.

Nature Magazine, 1214 Sixteenth Street, Washington, D. C., announces that the amount to be awarded first prize-winners in its monthly and special contests for garden and outdoor photographs will be doubled by the Folmer Graflex Corporation if the winning picture was taken with a Graflex camera. *Nature Magazine* promises \$10, the Folmer Graflex Corporation \$10 in addition. Particulars of these contests were announced in the February *Author & Journalist*.



Courage of the Mounted

By
John Paul Jones

*When you take an outtrail of the
North you don't come back alone—
if you wear the scarlet and gold!*



WHITE-FACED, sick, nauseated, Jim Carson stumbled out of the barracks room into the stabbing breath of the night. Behind him someone slammed the door shut with a contemptuous oath, and that oath rasped upon the quivering nerves of Jim Carson like a dentist's drill probing a cavity. Like the blows of a trip hammer the words of Inspector O'Neil pounded against his ear drums:

"Carson, you're a damned yellow coward; and there is no place for cowards in the Royal Mounted!"

He staggered blindly down the single street that twisted in and out among the cabins of the settlement. Without thought as to where he was going he lurched out of the slushy street into

the unbroken snow. His eyes lifted to the heavens in numb, inexpressible agony. Up there a million dancing points of blue flame gleamed and glittered, and high above the snow-mantled evergreens a phosphorescent moon flooded the White Silence in a silvered glow.

Coward! He laughed bitterly. It was the damnable, soul-torturing truth: he was a coward! He, the son of Bill Carson, was a coward! Big Bill Carson, who had died in the line of duty, whose name was revered by the Royal Canadian Mounted, had begot a yellow, cringing coward for a son! Even the stars seemed like the leering eyes of the demons who tortured his soul and taunted him with the words of Inspector O'Neil . . . "a damned yellow coward!"

From a recent issue of North-West Stories.

In a short time he had enrolled for the training. He found it intensely practical and stimulating. It did much to enable him to develop his literary ability. Since enrolling he has sold many stories to *Ace High*, *North-West*, and to other publications.

Luck was responsible for Mr. Jones's finding **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST**, but it was his initiative

"Luck"

*May play a part, but
in itself cannot bring
success.*

THE INTERESTING STORY
OF JOHN PAUL JONES



While in a Southern city one day, John Paul Jones was walking along a slushy street following a heavy rain storm.

He kicked a tattered magazine that came in contact with his foot. He would have passed on, but the word "author" caught his eye. He stooped and picked up the magazine, found it interesting, and carried it home.

It was **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST**. It proved of great value to him, so he also filled out and signed the coupon on the last page of the magazine asking for information about the Simplified Training Course.

that made him send for "The Way Past the Editor." A serious desire to achieve success in writing, initiative, and the Simplified Training Course will develop your ability and start you on the way to successful authorship. We have a copy of "The Way Past the Editor" for you. And the convenient coupon is printed below to make it doubly easy for you to secure this booklet that may open the way to success for you.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST,
S. T. C. Dept.,
1839 Champa Street, Denver, Colo.

Please send me, without obligation on my part, your free booklet, "The Way Past the Editor" and full information about the Simplified Training course in Short-Story Writing.



Name.....

Address.....

